

Miracles Daily

BY JANET REESE

*Babies catch up ...
with the help of tenderness
and specialized care*

All is quiet and tranquil in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). A baby, who could fit in the palm of a hand, snuggles kangaroo care-style (skin-to-skin) in his mother's warm embrace.

In the same unit, a Giraffe® bed—a special incubator with a radiant warmer that simulates the light, temperature and humidity of a uterus—cocoon a newly born premature infant. Attentive neonatal nurses care for and monitor her constantly.

Many parents never anticipate complications with their newborns. While not all babies need neonatal intensive care, parents can rest assured knowing these services are readily available in the NICUs at Littleton and Parker Adventist Hospitals.

Both NICUs are designated Level III units, which means they offer the most extensive level of critical care for newborns in south metro Denver and the Parker area. Each unit is equipped to provide expert, loving attention to high-risk newborns in a comfortable, friendly atmosphere. The units accommodate family-centered care that focuses on the babies' developmental needs.

Miracles happen daily as the infants thrive and grow. Highly trained specialists, many with more than 20 years' experience, care for the fragile, sick and premature infants. As a Level IIIB unit, Littleton Adventist's NICU cares for infants born at 23 weeks and above; as a Level IIIA unit, Parker Adventist's NICU cares for babies born at 28 weeks and above.



Hannah Offutt holds her healthy baby, Addison, who weighed just 3 pounds, 12 ounces at birth.

Parents can count on a cohesive team of medical experts, including neonatologists (doctors who specialize in the care of newborns), neonatal nurses, pediatricians, respiratory therapists, physical therapists, occupational therapists and developmental specialists. Neonatal nurse practitioners are in the nursery to care for the little ones around the clock, every day and night of the week.

LITTLETON ADVENTIST NICU

Sue Krisl, BSN, NICU assistant nurse manager at Littleton Adventist Hospital, helped to open the unit more than 20 years ago. “Five years ago, we built a new NICU that our veteran nurses helped to design,” she says. “The unit, where we can care for up to 26 infants, has homey ‘cubbies’—separated, private spaces for every baby’s individualized development care. Each cubby has a chair, sink, utility cabinets and fridge for the parents’ use.”



Sue Krisl, BSN, NICU assistant nurse manager at Littleton Adventist Hospital

When Michael Kyung was born at Littleton Adventist at just 23 weeks and weighed only 14 ounces, his mother, Kristin, knew he was in good hands. Michael spent three and a half months in the NICU before going home. “I didn’t feel like I had to be in the NICU all the time because of the excellent staff,” Kristin says. “I could go home and sleep, feeling everything was fine. From day one of delivery, we felt so welcome, which helped with the emotional side of having a premature baby.”



Dixie Weber, M.S., RNC, clinical manager for the NICU and Well-Baby Nursery, and Danielle Smith, M.D., medical director

PARKER ADVENTIST NICU

The NICU at Parker Adventist Hospital is an open unit adjacent to the ward where the Well-Baby Nursery also is located. The NICU and nursery expanded in April from an eight-bed unit to a 15-bed comprehensive care Newborn Center, which includes well-infant, intermediate and neonatal intensive care space.

“Parker Adventist has a unique partnership with The Children’s Hospital,” says Dixie Weber, M.S., RNC, clinical manager for the NICU and Well-Baby Nursery. “Specialists from Children’s are on-site 24/7 to care for our babies. Parents appreciate their well-respected expertise.”

Born at Parker Adventist at just 31 weeks, Addison Offutt weighed 3 pounds, 12 ounces. She stayed in the NICU for four weeks before going home. “There were no complications because of the fast-acting medical specialists who knew exactly how to care for us,” says her mom, Hannah. “I loved the personal touch of the friendly medical staff. I appreciated the constant updates they gave us on Addison’s development. She was able to leave four weeks earlier than expected due to her rapid progress.” 

ONLINE

Need a Miracle?

If you have a high-risk pregnancy, your doctor may suggest delivering at a hospital with a neonatal intensive care unit. To learn more about the NICU at Littleton or Parker Adventist Hospitals, visit mylittletonhospital.org or parkerhospital.org today.

